



Targeted Brownfields Assessments

EPA's Brownfields Program is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. EPA's Brownfields Program provides financial and technical assistance for brownfields revitalization, including grants for environmental assessment, cleanup, and job training.

WHAT IS A TARGETED BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT?

EPA's Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA) program is designed to help states, tribes, and municipalities—especially those without EPA Brownfields Assessment pilots/grants—minimize the uncertainties of contamination often associated with brownfields. Targeted Brownfields Assessments supplement and work with other efforts under EPA's Brownfields Program to promote cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields.

Under the TBA program, EPA provides funding and/or technical assistance for environmental assessments at brownfields sites throughout the country. Under the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act, EPA's TBA assistance is available through two sources: directly from EPA through EPA Regional Brownfields offices under Subtitle A of the law, and from state or tribal voluntary response program offices receiving funding under Subtitle C of the law. A TBA may encompass one or more of the following activities:

- A screening or "all appropriate inquiry" (Phase I) assessment, including a background and historical investigation and a preliminary site inspection;
- A full (Phase II) environmental assessment, including sampling activities to identify the types and concentrations of contaminants and the areas of contamination to be cleaned; and
- Establishment of cleanup options and cost estimates based on future uses and redevelopment plans.

Targeted Brownfields Assessment funding may only be used at properties eligible for EPA Brownfields funding. The property must be "a real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant." The Brownfields Law offered amendments that made additional

properties eligible for TBA funding, including mine-scarred land; properties contaminated by a controlled substance (as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802)); and petroleum-contaminated properties of relatively low risk.

EPA generally will not fund TBAs at properties where the owner is responsible for the contamination unless there is a clear means of recouping EPA expenditures. Further, the TBA program does not provide resources to conduct cleanup or building demolition activities. Cleanup assistance is available, however, under EPA's cleanup or RLF grants.

TARGETED BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT ASSISTANCE

EPA may use TBA funds for federally-led environmental assessment activities or for environmental assessments conducted by states or tribes under Subtitle C cooperative agreements with EPA. When EPA takes the lead for a TBA, it works in consultation with the state or tribe. Whether the environmental assessment is EPA-, state-, or tribal-led, early and meaningful opportunities for community involvement are generally part of a TBA.

Under Subtitle A of the Brownfields Law, TBA assistance is allocated by each of EPA's ten Regional offices. The Regions have discretion in selecting areas to target for environmental assessment assistance and typically prefer to target properties that: are abandoned or publicly owned; have low to moderate contamination; include issues of environmental justice; suffer from the stigma of liability; or have a prospective purchaser willing to buy and pay for the cleanup of the property, if needed. The selection process is guided by criteria used to help establish relative priorities among the properties within a Region. The criteria include the following:

- Property control and ownership transfer is not an impediment—preference will be given to sites

which are publicly owned, either directly by a municipality or through a quasi-public entity such as a community development corporation. If a property is privately owned, there generally must be a clear means of recouping EPA expenditures.

- There is a strong municipal commitment—either financially, or through commitment of municipal resources for other components of the project.
- There is a clear municipal/community vision and support for property revitalization.
- There are adequate leveraged funds available for cleanup and redevelopment, and/or the property has strong development potential (perhaps demonstrated by past or present developer interest).
- EPA assessment assistance is crucial to the property's redevelopment; lack of an assessment has proven to be an obstacle at the property.
- Existing information supports redevelopment—the property will likely have low to moderate contamination levels, and redevelopment will provide tangible benefits for the community.
- The project area has a clear need for revitalization evidenced by significant deterioration and/or significant environmental justice issues.
- There is clear coordination between the EPA Region and the state or tribe.
- The TBA is consistent with other EPA/federal agency initiatives—the property has an important link to other EPA/state or EPA/tribal initiatives; a direct health/environmental threat will be mitigated or property revitalization will serve to spur further beneficial activity in the surrounding area.

Under Subtitle C of the Brownfields Law, TBA assistance can also be allocated by each state and tribe receiving Subtitle C funding. The selection criteria and amount of assistance available varies with each state and tribe.

SOME TARGETED BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT SUCCESSES

Old Town, Maine—As a result of EPA's TBA program, four acres of formerly contaminated property on the banks of the Penobscot River in Old Town, Maine is now a recreational area with a playground and paths for running and biking. The property's building had been used as a warehouse until the city foreclosed on the property for unpaid taxes. For 17 years the property stood abandoned, as fears regarding suspected contamination and responsibility for expensive cleanup kept potential purchasers at bay.

Old Town contacted EPA seeking assistance with the property, and EPA determined the extent of the

property's contamination under its TBA program. Following a \$20,000 assessment, the property's abandoned structures were demolished and the contamination cleaned up. While the city funded this extensive cleanup, EPA pursued the former owners for reimbursement of cleanup costs.

Honolulu, Hawaii—In Honolulu's Kaka'ako district, waterfront property that has long been home to fish canneries, ship yards, city industrial yards, and office buildings is being transformed into such varied enterprises as a children's museum, parks, and several private commercial and retail projects. EPA provided a critical piece of this redevelopment puzzle by awarding \$90,000 in TBA funding to the Hawaii Department of Health. The Department of Health retained oversight authority for both assessment and subsequent cleanup, but worked closely with the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA), which was working to redevelop this area. The eventual redevelopment of the Kaka'ako district will create new jobs for surrounding communities and increased tax revenues for the city.

Smithville, Texas—Due in large part to the cooperation of two federal agencies, a former metal fabrication plant in Smithville, Texas is now home to a furniture manufacturing company. In 1990 the previous owner filed for bankruptcy on this contaminated, three-acre property. Due to its prime location as a possible industrial district, the city marshaled its resources to clean up and redevelop the property. In addition to environmental assessment work, EPA assisted Smithville in acquiring aid from the U.S. Department of Commerce and its technical assistance program. The city completed property cleanup and the property was ready for reuse by the furniture manufacturer.

HOW CAN YOU APPLY FOR TARGETED BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT ASSISTANCE?

TBAs supplement other efforts under EPA's Brownfields Program to promote cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields.

The TBA selection process varies with each EPA Region and by state Voluntary Response Programs. Each Region is given an annual budget to spend on TBAs. State Voluntary Response Programs allocate TBA funding on a case-by-case basis. If you are interested in receiving TBA assistance, please contact the EPA Brownfields staff in your Region or staff in your state or tribal Voluntary Response Program. You can obtain current contact information under the "Tools and Contacts" section of EPA's Brownfields web site, at: <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>. You can also call EPA's Office of Brownfields Cleanup and Redevelopment at (202) 566-2777.